

# JTA: Track Rider & Jockey

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A Track Rider (TR) plays a crucial role in the daily preparation and conditioning of racehorses. Their duties include exercising horses, saddling and unsaddling before and after trackwork, and implementing tailored training programs as directed by the foreman or head trainer. Track Riders focus solely on training and conditioning, without participating in competitive racing.



Jockeys and Apprentice Jockeys may undertake similar tasks during trackwork, the key distinction lies in their accreditation and competitive responsibilities. Jockeys and Apprentices are licensed professionals authorized to ride in official races.

Onsite: Track riders work at racecourse locations across Queensland, working outdoors in varying weather conditions and across flexible or irregular hours.

Offsite: Track Riders occasionally travel to offsite locations for training programs and races, working outdoors in varying weather conditions and across flexible or irregular hours.

Often ride in groups of 2-3 and may be required to exercise 8+ horses per shift. Typically, One (1) piece of work (ride) takes approximately 20 mins.

## Track Rider and Jockey



**Preparing Horses for Training (Tacking)**

- Prepare equipment and select appropriate saddle, saddle pad, and girth for each horse
- Place saddle pad and saddle correctly on horses back. Requires forward reaching, manual dexterity and lifting of 5kgs
- Secure the grith to ensure comfort and safety. Requires fine motor skills and grip strength
- Adjust straps and ad check bridle fit. Requires fine motor skills, pull down motion and grip strength
- Prolonged standing requires when saddling horse
- Placing bridle on a horse involves forward and lateral reaching. Use of dexterity and grip strength to tighten bridle to fit industry standards. Occasional bending when moving around horse to check fit.

## Mounting and Dismounting Horse

- Trackwork riders are required to mount and dismount multiple horses during each shift. This task involves a combination of strength, flexibility, coordination, balance, and horse handling skills. It must be performed quickly but safely, often while the horse is alert or fresh.
- The leg-up method is a common and efficient way for trackwork riders to mount horses, especially when speed, rider size, or the horse's height makes mounting from the ground or a block impractical. This method involves a second person lifting the rider onto the horse using coordinated timing and strength.
- Good core strength and balance to coordinate with the lift.
- Flexibility and mobility to swing the leg over mid-air.

## Exercising Horse

- Trackwork riders are responsible for exercising thoroughbred horses according to the trainer's instructions. This includes walking, trotting, cantering, and galloping horses under saddle, often in a structured workout on a training track or in a designated riding area.
- Report on horses' performance and behaviour to trainer. Interpersonal communication and information processing required.
- Requires strong core strength and balance to remain centered in the saddle.
- Sustained use of leg muscles and grip strength for cues and control.
- Endurance and cardiovascular fitness to ride multiple horses per session.
- Tolerance for early morning starts, cold weather, and repetitive high-intensity work.
- High degree of situational awareness—including other horses, riders, and track rules.

## Race Riding

- Jockeys are licensed professionals responsible for riding racehorses in competitive events. The role requires extreme physical fitness, tactical intelligence, and elite riding skill. Race riding includes pre-race preparations, strategic in-race decision-making, and post-race debriefing, all within a highly regulated, high-risk environment.
- Lightweight but strong build—strict weight maintenance regime (often under 55 kilograms).
- Exceptional balance, agility, and core strength to stay secure at high speeds.
- Fine motor skills for rein control and race communication.
- Rapid decision-making under pressure.
- Strong situational awareness—including position, pace, other runners, and rules.